

REMARKS

The applicants thank the examiner for acknowledging applicants' claim for foreign priority and reception of the certified copy of the foreign priority document that was submitted on 6 January 2004. The applicants also thank the examiner for having returned initialed copies of the PTO 1449 that was submitted on 6 January 2004 and on 16 November 2006 .

Claims 1 – 11 are currently pending. Claims 2, 5, 6, 10 and 11 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 4, and 8 – 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2002/0070876 to Hirohama *et al.* The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations recited in now canceled claims 2, 5 and 6. Claim 8 has been amended to include the limitations recited in now canceled claims 10 and 11. The examiner indicated that claims 6 and 11 contained allowable subject matter. Therefore, amended claims 1 and 8 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 4 and 9 depend from claims 1 and 8, respectively. Therefore, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn for at least the above-mentioned reasons with respect to claims 1 and 8.

Claims 3 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2002/0070876 to Hirohama *et al.* in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,804,999 to Okubo. The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.

Claim 3 and 7 depend from amended claim 1. Therefore, the rejection of these claims should be withdrawn for at least the above-mentioned reasons with respect to claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

If there are any problems with the payment of fees, please charge any underpayments and credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kerry S. Culpepper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Kerry" is written in a larger, more prominent script, followed by "S." and "Culpepper". The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

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